

# Town is making cash from trash

Recycling effort continues to grow at town transfer station

By Grey Perry  
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DUXBURY — As the transfer station offers more and more outlets for recycled solid waste, financial benefits to the town continue to add up.

In 1975 the refuse transfer station was built on Mayflower Street and recycling efforts began with paper and cardboard. Gradually, the state has mandated recycling for other materials. The state would like to see a rate of 50 per-

cent recycling. Duxbury had a rate of 31 percent last year, fourth best in southeastern Massachusetts, tied with Cohasset. Only Halifax at 41 percent and Hingham at 38 percent did better. All received grades of "A" for their recycling work, according to DPW director Wally Tonaszuck.

Unless the town has a landfill, it costs a lot of money to remove trash. Without a landfill, recycling makes dollars and sense.

For fiscal year '95, the transfer station returned \$145,000 out of a budget of \$650,000 due to recycling, Tonaszuck said. Much of that came from recycling Type 1 plastics, which are ground up at the station. The town gets 22 cents per pound for the plastic, if it is clean and not contaminated with other types of plastic. Con-

taminated plastic is returned to sender, and the town has to pay the shipping both ways, plus pay to dispose of the contaminated plastic. The town recently bought another granulator to handle more plastics, which should pay for itself in one year, Tonaszuck said.

The other cost saving is an avoided cost. If trash can be recycled, the town does not have to pay \$71 per ton to have it hauled away to SEMASS waste-to-energy plant. That is where the balance of the \$145,000 savings was realized, he said.

Paper used to account for more revenue than it does now. In 1995 newsprint was scarce. Paper and cardboard yielded \$50 per ton. This year the market is flat. The hauling fee is \$80 per load, and the containers used are free if the paper is well segregated.

Duxbury generates approximately 8000 tons of rubbish each year. The 31 percent rating the town received means that 31 percent of that 8000 tons was recycled. A total of 1,488 tons of paper, cardboard, metal, glass, plastics and cans were recycled in 1995, the only year for which figures are available. Another 1,037 tons of leaves and yard wastes were composted and 47 tons of clothing, tires, auto batteries and paint were diverted. Tonaszuck says his workers at the transfer station would like to see the tonnage of recycled materials go up.

"Part of the effort is educational," he said. "We need to get the message out that more and more materials can and should be recycled. The state has mandated this, and we want to cooperate. It



Staff photo/Grey Perry

**At your service** — Transfer station workers Karen Janczewski, David Elliott and Glen Ghidoni await their customers to assist them in their recycling efforts.

is in our best interest, financial and environmental, to do this."

There are many signs posted in the collection/recycling areas, which have been spread out to make it easier to drop off separate articles. Station worker Glen Ghidoni often offers to assist unloading, although it is not part of his job description. "I like to help the people who are helping us," he said.

"These people are our customers," said David Elliott. "The more we can help them, the more we can save the town money."

The station is open from Wednesdays through Sundays from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m., unless a holiday falls on those days. Sunday is the busiest day at the transfer station, Elliott said.

All current residential vehicles must have a sticker to use the transfer station. The \$70 stickers pay for half of the real costs of operating the station, Tonaszuck said. Full rules and regulations for the use of the station are issued with the permits. If new materials are added to the recycle list, special mailings are made during the year to inform everyone of the change.

Tonaszuck estimates about 95 percent of town residents cooperate willingly and many want to do more. "Almost everyone is behind this effort," he said. "A few still resist, but we try to do our best to encourage them and help to make the recycling effort as painless for everyone as we can. It's to everyone's benefit."



Staff photo/Grey Perry

**Saving money for the town** — Recycling efforts returned over \$145,000 to the general fund last year.